

## **INDIA STATES TIMES NEWS DESK**

### **NATIONAL**

- India has reported 24,010 new COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of coronavirus cases in the country to 99,56,557.
- The World Bank Board of Executive Directors has approved four projects in India worth over \$800 million that support a range of development initiatives.
- India will have to spend as much as \$1.8 billion in the first phase of its coronavirus vaccination programme, even after support under the COVAX vaccine-sharing scheme, the GAVI vaccine alliance estimated.
- The air quality in the national capital continued to be in 'poor' category on Thursday as the overall Air Quality Index (AQI) surged to 252
- Farmers' protest against the three agricultural laws at Delhi borders reached day 22 on Thursday. On Wednesday, the Supreme Court heard petitions seeking directions to authorities to remove the protesters from the national capital's borders.
- Delhi government gave its sanction to the police to charge 18 people accused in Northeast Delhi riots case, including former JNU student Umar Khalid, Sharjeel Imam and ex-AAP councillor Tahir Hussain.
- The Pune social welfare department has erected a 1,000-bed capacity hostel at Pune's Yerawada, at the cost of ₹53 crore. The hostel is located on survey numbers 104 and 105 and the Maharashtra government approved the finance for the project.
- Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan claimed victory in local body polls and said it's "a befitting reply to those who are trying to destroy Kerala".
- The Pune Municipal Corporation's tuberculosis (TB) detection drive has led to detection of over 79 new cases in 15 days in December.
- Chief Metropolitan Magistrate in Mumbai's Esplanade on Wednesday granted bail to Republic TV CEO Vikas Khanchandani in connection with the alleged Television Rating Points (TRP) manipulation scam.
- Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) officials said that around 3.9 lakh owners quoted the wrong guidance value in a bid to pay less property tax.
- Burger King India's market value hit ₹7,604 crore (\$1.04 billion) on Wednesday as its shares jumped 233% from their IPO price since listing.





- COVID-19 pandemic has wiped out 81 million jobs across Asia-Pacific region this year, according to a report by International Labour Organization (ILO).

## **INTERNATIONAL**

- The US Congress has passed the \$740 billion defence policy bill, which among other things calls out the Chinese aggression against India.
- Air pollution was recorded as a cause for the death of a nine-year-old girl who died following an asthma attack in a landmark ruling in the UK. Ella Kissi-Debrah had multiple seizures and was admitted to hospital nearly 30 times in three years before her death in 2013.
- The price of Bitcoin surpassed \$20,000 for the first time on Wednesday, its highest ever. The cryptocurrency's price jumped 4.5% to move as high as \$20,440.
- Germany on Wednesday reported 952 deaths from coronavirus, the highest rise in daily deaths from the virus so far in the country, taking the total count to over 23,000.
- Novelist and philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, the ex-wife of Amazon Founder Jeff Bezos, has given away more than \$4.1 billion in four months.
- The World Bank Board of Executive Directors has approved four projects in India worth over \$800 million that support a range of development initiatives.
- The UK has vaccinated a total of 1,37,897 people against coronavirus so far, the minister in charge of deployment of the vaccine, Nadhim Zahawi, said on Wednesday. Zahawi tweeted that 1.08 lakh have been vaccinated in England, followed by Scotland at 18,000, Wales at 7,897 and Northern Ireland at 4,000.
- US Vice President Mike Pence and his wife, Karen Pence, will take the COVID-19 vaccine publicly to boost public confidence in the vaccine's safety, the White House announced.
- Niue, an island in the South Pacific Ocean, has demanded a redelegation of national webspace .nu from the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN).
- NATO has criticised the new UN treaty banning nuclear weapons, which will be effective from January 22, claiming it lacks "rigorous" mechanisms for verification and will prove risky.
- Iran's manner of investigating the downing of a Ukrainian plane in January has flaws and many critical questions remain unanswered, an independent Canadian report said. Iran's Revolutionary Guards had said that they accidentally shot down the plane after mistaking it for a missile.
- The Trump administration on Wednesday designated Vietnam and Switzerland as currency manipulators.

